

WIGMORE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Leintwardine

7th March 1905.

Gentlemen,

I beg to lay before you my Annual Report for the year 1904.

The area of your District is 37,364 acres, exclusive of the area covered with water.

The population of the District at the Census of 1901 was 4,150 and the estimated population at the middle of 1904 was 4,052 showing a decrease of 98.

I am pleased to say that your district has been unusually free from any disease of an epidemic character, as you will be able to judge by statistics further on in the report.

The investigation into the sources of outbreaks of infection, and the efforts to prevent, by precept and warning, the spread of such outbreaks, is the most important duty of the Health Officer, and, speaking personally, is the one that makes the greatest call upon time and energy, and the amount of pains taken and of success obtained, should be judged by the absence of a record of cases, and not by the reverse. The greater the success obtained, the greater is the future responsibility incurred, as it is obvious that any district which has for some years enjoyed comparative immunity from epidemics of such diseases as Scarlet Fever etc, which spread by personal contact, and as a rule attack an individual once in a life-time only, must contain a large amount of susceptible individuals, and need more precise precautions to control the disease whenever the infection appears again.

The

San Francisco

25th March 1904

Gentlemen,

I beg to lay before you my annual report for the year 1904.

The area of your District is 37,364 acres, exclusive of the area covered with water.

The population of the District at the Census of 1901 was 4,150 and the estimated population at the middle of 1904 was 4,025 showing a decrease of 125.

I am pleased to say that your District has been unusually free from any disease of an epidemic character, as you will be able to judge by statistics further on in the report.

The investigation into the sources of outbreaks of infection, and the efforts to prevent, by proper and warning, the spread of such outbreaks, is the most important duty of the Health Officer, and, requiring personally, is the one that makes the greatest call upon time and energy, and the amount of pains taken and of success obtained, should be judged by the absence of a record of cases, and not by the reverse. The greater the success obtained, the greater is the future responsibility incurred, as it is to be noted that any district which has for some years enjoyed comparative immunity from epidemics of such diseases as Scarlet Fever etc, which spread by personal contact, and as a rule attack an individual once in a lifetime only, must contain a large amount of susceptible individuals, and need more precise precautions to control the disease whenever the infection appears.

The Emergency Small-pox Hospital at Birtley happily has not been required during the past year. It is thoroughly in order and ready to receive patients if there should be any occasion.

The Mortality Returns.

The following table shows certain statistics of Mortality during the year 1904, compared with the average for the same district during the past eight years, and for England and Wales in 1904.

	1904	Average of eight pre- ceding years.	England and Wales.
DEATHS per 1,000 of population	11.6	14.4	16.2
BIRTHS per 1,000 of population	23.2	27.2	27.9
DEATHS from Zymotic Di- seases per 1,000 of population	0	.74	1.94
DEATHS of Infants under one year per 1,000 Births	170	93.7	146

The death-rate is the lowest I have had to record since the formation of your district.

The Birth-rate is also very low and this doubtless is due to the decrease of the rural population and their migration into more populous centres. The Deaths of infants under one year is exceptionally heavy, and amounts to 16 which equals a death rate per 1,000 registered births of 170, this is the heaviest I have had to record, the largest one previously was that in 1900 which was 125.

There is a decided increase in the infantile mortality in the seventy-six great Towns vizt: 160, although the climatic conditions of last summer did not favour any prolonged prevalence of epidemic diarrhoea which usually accounts for many of the deaths of infants. The Death-rate from the seven Zymotic Diseases, (Small-pox, Measles, Scarlet-Fever,

Diphtheria

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 Mortality during the year 1904, compared with the
 average for the same district during the past eight
 years, and for England and Wales in 1904.

England and Wales	Average of eight pre- ceding years.	1904	DEATHS per 1,000 of population
			BIRTHS per 1,000 of population
15.2	14.4	11.8	23.2
22.2	27.2	23.2	27.2
1.25	74	0	DEATHS from Symptomatic Di- scases per 1,000 of population
145	25.7	170	DEATHS of Infants under one year per 1,000 Births

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 deaths of infants. The death-rate from the seven
 Symptomatic Diseases, (Small-pox, Measles, Diphtheria,

Diphtheria, Whooping-Cough, Typhoid-Fever and Diarrhoea) is nil, and was considered an index to the Sanitary state of a district.

It is now recognised that there are many other diseases dependent more or less upon in-sanitary conditions, which are capable of amendment. Too much importance must not, therefore, be attached to a low zymotic death-rate.

With reference to the deaths of those under one year of which there were 16, the causes were as follows:-

Atrophy	2
Atrophy of stomach	5
Convulsions	4
Premature Birth	2
Bronchitis	2
	<hr/> 16

The total number of deaths in the district is 47 being two lower than in 1903 and the lowest for the past eight years.

Seven of the deaths of infants under one year were due to atrophy. Simple wasting or atrophy is generally due to insufficient or improper food. I have made careful investigation into the deaths of each one of these seven cases and find that these children were from birth abnormally delicate and that the parents, either on the father's or mother's side, were of unusually weak constitutions. There was in every case an absence of symptoms indicative of any local disease, in short, they were defective from birth.

The following table gives the ages of the persons who died during 1904:-

Under one year	16
One and under 5 years	0
Five and under 15 years	3
Fifteen and under 25 years	4
Twenty-five and under 65 years	11
Sixty-five and upwards	13
	<hr/> 47

Diphtheria, Whooping-Cough, Typhoid-Fever and Diarrhoea is nil, and was considered an index to the sanitary state of a district.

It is now recognised that there are many other diseases dependent more or less upon in-sanitary conditions, which are capable of amendment. Too much importance must not, therefore, be attached to a low syphilitic death-rate.

With reference to the deaths of those under one year of which there were 16, the causes were as follows

Atrophy	2
Atrophy of stomach	2
Convolutions	4
Premature Birth	2
Fractures	2
	<hr/>
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This year I have to record seven cases of deaths from Phthisis which is about 15 per cent of the deaths from all causes, giving a death-rate from this cause per 1,000 of population of 1.7. At the International Congress on Tuberculosis held in London in 1901, it was insisted that the healthy house was anti-tubercular, but if tubercular germs fall in an ill-lighted damp house, they maintain their activity for a long time, whether the house be in Town or country. The evils of an unhealthy house are not confined to the risk of contagion, the want of air and light acts on the nutrition of the inmates, children go off, pine away, and the strongest men cannot withstand it, every human being living in these places is the destined prey of infectious disease, they become pre-disposing causes of consumption. I wish to point out that the general insanitary conditions in the houses of the working classes diminish the chance of curing consumption and in predisposing to, and spreading the disease.

The following table shows the number and nature of the cases of certain infectious diseases which occurred in the district during 1904 and also the number of houses infected, and I can, on reference to my Notes, give an opinion as to the probable source of the infection in each case.

	Scarlet-Fever	Diphtheria
Number of Houses infected	3	1
Number of people attacked	8	1
Number of Deaths	0	0

SCARLET-FEVER

There were three cases of Scarlet Fever in the village of Lingen, the first one arose possibly from old germs and insanitary surroundings, the other two, though not in the same house, doubtless arose from indirect communication with the first case. The five re-
maining

maining cases were at Gately, these were all in the same house and evidently the disease was communicated from one child to another, the origin, I believe, to be a boy attending School suffering from the disease so mildly and ill defined as not to have attracted much notice or received medical attendance.

DIPHTHERIA.

There was one case of Diphtheria at Ponton due to defective drainage and water supply. No School was closed in the District on my recommendation during the past year. There has been no case of over-crowding in your district during the year.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE SANITARY WORK.

During the course of the year, I have, at certain periods, or as occasion required, inspected your district, in order, by personal observation, to keep myself informed as to the conditions, injurious to health existing therein, or in connection with outbreaks of disease. Whenever I have found any local sanitary defects, I have made careful notes, and called the attention of the Sanitary Inspector to the same, with a view to the necessary action being taken, the outcome of which is included in the Inspector's Report.

The following is an account of the Sanitary Work for the year 1904 in the Wigmore Rural Sanitary District furnished by the Sanitary Inspector:-

VI	Houses Visited
15	Misances abated
4	Houses in bad repair
7	New drains or old ones reconstructed
9	New Closets or old ones repaired
1	Bad Water
8	Accumulations
0	Over-crowding

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

Many Cottages present features of construction, conditions or surroundings, to which objection might properly be taken from a Sanitary point of view, but often these are not of a sufficiently tangible nature to make the subject of statutory notice under the Public Health Act.

Where cottages are of old constructions, they are often slightly imbedded and inclined to be damp on that account, which is aggravated in many instances by want of proper eaves-troughing, a provision which has a double sanitary advantage as preventing dampness and providing water. Most of the houses have drains of some kind bearing off the liquid house refuse, but in many cases they are very imperfect, with uneven channels of soft brick, favouring accumulations, or closed drains carelessly laid with unsuitable pipes and untrapped inlets and the outlet made to discharge in the nearest ditch or water course or road-way.

The closets are generally of objectionable construction, chiefly through being provided with imperfectly constructed brick pits, which admit rain and surface water, and allow their contents to percolate into the surrounding subsoil, often in dangerous proximity to the well, and unprovided with means of scavenging.

WATER SUPPLY OF NEW HOUSES.

The important matter of carrying out the legal enactments, requiring a supply of good water to be provided within a reasonable distance of every new house before it is occupied, has been attended to during the year, and certificates to this effect have been granted.

During the year your Council has applied to the Local Government Board for sanction to borrow a sum of money for purposes of Sewerage and Sewage disposal

for

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The important matter of carrying out the legal enactments, requiring a supply of good water to be provided within a reasonable distance of every new house before it is occupied, has been attended to during the year, and certificates to this effect have been granted.

During the year your Council has applied to the

for the village of Wigmore, an Inquiry was held in April of ^{this} ~~last~~ year with reference to such application. The loan has been granted and tenders have been submitted to your Council, and I hope the work will be completed during 1903.

THE FACTORY AND WORKSHOPS ACT OF 1901.

Section 132 of this Act is as follows:-

"The Medical Officer of Health of every District Council shall, in his Annual Report to them, report specifically on the administration of this Act in Workshops and Work-places, he shall send a copy of his Annual Report or so much of it as deals with this subject to the Secretary of State".

Within the Rural District are four Mills which are Factories, and do not come under your jurisdiction.

The Workshops in the District are 19 in number.

Bakehouses are separately dealt with under the Act and (unless they are factories) are to be inspected by the Sanitary Officers.

There are four Public Bakehouses in the district, three situate in the village of Leintwardine and one in the village of Wigmore, they all meet the requirements of the Act viz:-

- a. Cleanliness
- b. Air-space
- c. Ventilation
- d. Drainage of floors on which wet processes are carried on.
- e. Provision of suitable and sufficient sanitary conveniences.

There are five Slaughter-Houses in the District. Three are situate in the village of Leintwardine, one of which requires pitching in front, one has the drain inside, and the remaining one complies with all Sanitary requirements.

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April of last year with reference to such matters.
The Commission has been provided with the necessary
information to the Commission, and I hope the work will be
completed under the Commission.

THE COMMISSION AND THE COMMISSIONERS

Section 123 of the Act is as follows:-

"The Medical Officer of Health of every District
Council shall, in his Annual Report to the Council,
specify the names of the persons who have been
admitted to the District Council, and shall send a copy of his
Annual Report to the Council, and it shall be the duty of the
Council to the Secretary of State."

Under the Act, the Council and the Council
are required, and as the Council has been
The Council in the District and it is required
that the Council shall be dealt with under the
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4. Councils of the Council and the Council
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will be the Council:-

Of the two in the village of Wigmore, one is not in use, and the other one will receive attention when the Sewerage Scheme is completed.

I append the four Tabular Statements of Sickness and Mortality during the year 1904, and one relating to the Factory and Workshops Act.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

John Cartwright

Medical Officer of Health.

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W. H. H. H. H.

Medical Officer of Health.